

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5536
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY DUBLIN
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

UNCLAS LONDON 10554

USEEC

COPENHAGEN FOR REGIONAL FISHERIES ATTACHE

E.O.11652: N/A
TAGS: EFIS, EC, UK
SUBJECT: EC FISHERIES: AGRICULTURE MINISTER REJECTS
COMMISSION PLANS

1. DURING FISHERIES DEBATE IN PARLIAMENT JUNE 23, AGRICULTURE MINISTER JOHN SILKIN REAFFIRMED UKG POSITION THAT EC COMMISSION PROPOSALS FOR THE DIVISION OF FISHERY RESOURCES BASED ON HISTORICAL CATCHES WITHIN 200-MILE LIMIT WAS "NOT GOOD ENOUGH." HE SAID THAT THE COMMON FISHERIES POLICY MUST BE RADICALLY REDESIGNED. THE NEW POLICY SHOULD INCLUDE PROVISION FOR SUBSTANTIAL AREAS
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AROUND THE UK COAST WHERE BRITISH FISHERMEN WILL HAVE EXCLUSIVE OR PREFERENTIAL ACCESS. COMMISSION PROPOSALS FOR A BELT OF QUOTAS WERE NOT SATISFACTORY. HE REITERATED THAT THE BRITISH AIM STILL REMAINS CONSERVATION OF STOCKS WITHIN A VARIABLE COASTAL BELT STRETCHING UP TO 50 MILES.

2. WHILE SAYING THAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS READY TO CONSID-

ER ANY ALTERNATIVE METHODS AS LONG AS THE TWIN OBJECTIVES OF CONSERVATION AND DOMINANT PREFERENCE WERE MAINTAINED, SILKIN STATED EMPHATICALLY THAT ACCESS WITHIN A 12-MILE LIMIT SHOULD ULTIMATELY BE RESERVED EXCLUSIVELY TO FISHERMEN OF THE COASTAL STATE. ACCORDING TO SILKIN THE 12-MILE EXCLUSIVE ZONE WOULD PROVIDE BRITISH FISHERMEN WITH THE BULK OF THEIR TRADITIONAL PELAGIC CATCH, BUT ONLY ONE-FIFTH OF THEIR TRADITIONAL DEMERSAL CATCH, AND EVEN THAT WOULD INCLUDE A SUBSTANTIAL TONNAGE OF LESS FAMILIAR SPECIES. HE ADDED THAT WITHIN A 50-MILE LIMIT THERE ARE SUFFICIENT PELAGIC FISH STOCKS NOT ONLY FOR PRESENT NEEDS BUT TO CATER FOR CONSIDERABLE EXPANSION. THUS, IF BRITISH FISHERMEN HAD EXCLUSIVE RIGHTS OUT TO 50 MILES, THERE WOULD BE SUFFICIENT RESOURCES AVAILABLE FOR THEM TO BE ABLE TO MAINTAIN THE PRESENT SIZE OF THEIR DEMERSAL INDUSTRY AND THEREFORE PROVIDE A STRONG ENOUGH ECONOMIC BASE ON WHICH THEY COULD REBUILD THE INDUSTRY.

3. IN CLOSING, SILKIN WARNED THAT NO ONE SHOULD GET THE IMPRESSION THAT BECAUSE THE BRITISH ARE BEING "REASON-ABLE," THAT THEY ARE PREPARED TO SURRENDER THE "NEEDS AND RIGHTS" OF THEIR FISHERMEN. "WE UNDERSTAND THE PROBLEMS OF OTHER NATIONS, BUT THEY MUST BE PREPARED TO UNDERSTAND OURS. NOT EVERY MEMBER OF THE COMMUNITY HAS A FISHING INDUSTRY OF SUCH NATIONAL IMPORTANCE AS OURS. WE ARE DETERMINED TO PRESERVE BOTH OUR INDUSTRY AND OUR STOCKS

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SO THAT A STABLE AND PROSPEROUS FUTURE MAY BE ASSURED."

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Message Attributes

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